

## Activity #11: Strategies for Self-Control

### Section 3: Self-Control

#### GROUP 1: Strategies Involving the Physical Setup of Your Classroom

- Post rules, routines, and schedules; use real objects, pictures,
  - and photographs to illustrate
  - Arrange furniture to avoid congestion
  - Arrange classroom to include an area for quiet time
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#### GROUP 2: Strategies Involving Materials in Your Classroom

- Create big books of rules and routines for children to read
  - Model appropriate use of materials
  - Use pictures and other labels to keep materials organized
  - Keep materials easily accessible
  - Establish clean-up routines and signals
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#### GROUP 3: Strategies to Use with Groups of Children

- Use the same verbal and nonverbal signals (e.g., clapping, lights, songs, pictures, bells) consistently before and during transitions or to signal specific behaviors (e.g., everyone quiet, hands up)
- Minimize number and length of transitions; provide activities (songs, guessing games, etc.) during wait time
- Encourage self-monitoring and helping others during transitions
- Involve children in creating rules that address noise, movement, materials, and interactions with others
- Provide variety and choice within the day's schedule (indoor vs. outdoor, active vs. passive, quiet vs. loud, teacher led vs. child directed)
- Prepare children ahead of time for changes to routines or schedules
- Give clear, simple directions only when you have children's attention
- Use explanations and reasoning to communicate rules and standards
- Use Center Management Charts to limit the number of children participating in centers
- Play games that allow children to practice paying attention, waiting their turn, and modulating emotion (e.g., Simon Says, Red Light/Green Light, and Duck Duck Goose)
- Discuss read alouds: Have children talk about characters' feelings and behavior that could or did result

- Use puppets or role-playing to model feelings and behaviors that could result during specific situations, and have children help generate and discuss potential solutions
  - Label your own and others' feelings
  - Discuss feelings that arise in certain situations and what situations make us feel certain ways
  - When discussing feelings, focus on connections and differences between feelings and behaviors
  - Teach songs and movements for expressing feelings
  - Teach strategies for calming down (e.g., shaking out wiggles, deep breaths)
  - Keep pacing of group activities lively and introduce new materials to help children maintain attention
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#### **GROUP 4: Strategies to Use with Individual Children**

- Give positive feedback (verbal and nonverbal) for appropriate behavior during transitions, for following rules, and for remembering routines
- Check in with a child as steps of a new routine are completed
- Respond promptly to requests for help
- Intervene immediately when behavior escalates
- Provide a quiet place in the classroom for children to go when they need time to calm down or relax before rejoining the group
- Use guidance, persuasion, and distraction rather than power assertion to redirect a child's behavior
- Encourage children to express their emotions honestly as long as they do not hurt others
- Validate feelings rather than inappropriate behaviors that result from them (e.g., "It's ok to feel angry, but we need to use words instead of hitting; hitting hurts people.")
- Ignore inappropriate attention-getting behavior when possible
- Focus on what a child should do, rather than not do
- Provide warm reassurance and support during emotionally challenging times (saying goodbye to family members, show and tell)